The Government is fully committed to preserving and further strengthening the secular ethos of our country.

Proposal to form UT comprising Tirap and Changlang

644. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to form Union Territory comprising of Tirap and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the Union territory will be formed;

(d) whether Government have any other proposals for the formation of Union Territory in any other part of the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Freedom of Expression

†645. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that freedom of expression is enshrined in the Constitution as a fundamental right;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some people come forward to obstruct such freedom whether it be in book/film/play form; and

(c) what is being done by Government to keep the country out of the clutches of such fascist activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) Under Article 19 of the Constitution of India, freedom of expression has been recognized as a Fundamental Right. However, under the same Article, the State is empowered to impose reasonable restrictions on the operation of the Right in the interest of sovereignty and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

(b) and (c) Some isolated incidents have come to the notice of the Government. Since 'Public Order' is a State subject under the constitution it is the responsibility of the State government to maintain it. Depending on the requirement and gravity of any situation, the Law and Order machinery is expected to act firmly and swiftly.

White Paper on ISI

646. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have expedited any process of bringing out a white paper on the activities of ISI in India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) Preparation of a White Paper is under consideration.

Pak sponsored suicide squads

647. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item titled "Pak agencies sponsoring suicide squads" as appeared in the Times of India, dated 25th January, 2000;

(b) whether a view was expressed by the Pakistani agencies that Islam was in danger in India and the squads had to fight "Jehad" and if necessary become martyrs for the cause; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to check the menace of Fidayadeen groups (suicide squads)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

Pakistan intelligence agencies have been working in close concert with religious fundamentalist forces in Pakistan to deploy foreign mercenaries in the name of 'Jehad' to abet militancy.